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TAHITIAN LUXURY

INTRODUCING THE BRANDO

PHOTO BY TIM MCKENNA

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THE BRANDO: A POLYNESIAN ICON

TETIAROA, TAHITI

By Nicole Edwards

When asked how his day is going, the head concierge at The Brando replies with the same two words each time: “Always good.” That answer is hard to dispute if you’ve ever woken up on the only inhabited motu in Tetiaroa, Marlon Brando’s private atoll in Tahiti. Brando first found himself there during the filming of *Mutiny on the Bounty* and preservation of the area’s ecosystem became his lifelong passion. An iridescent blue lagoon, temperate and teeming with life, is cradled within the atoll’s 12-island arch. A wall

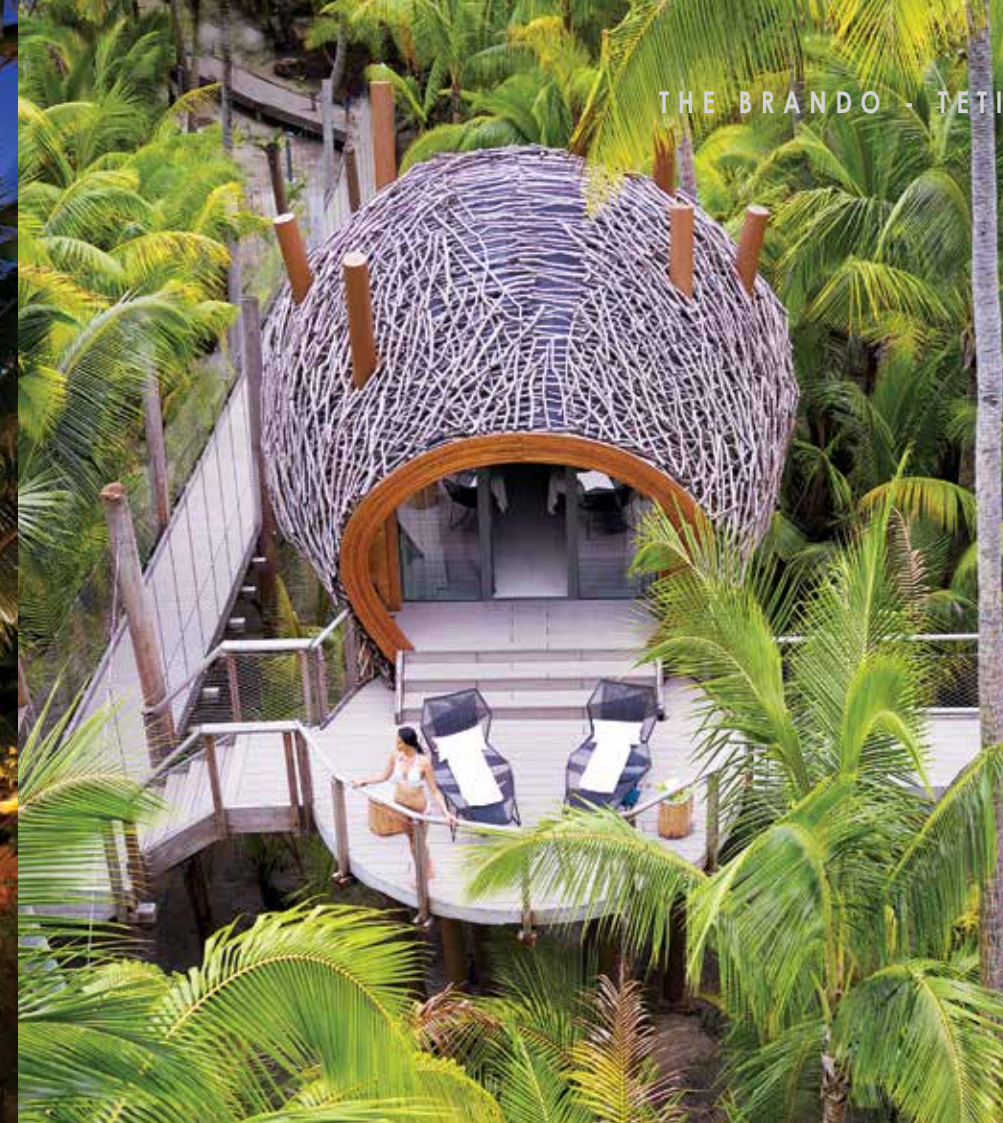
of colorful living reef keeps the roaring Pacific Ocean at bay. It’s just a 20-minute flight via private airport from Tahiti’s capital, Papeete, to catch a first-hand look at the setting that captured Brando’s heart and is sure to leave an indelible impression on yours.

Only 35 villas dot The Brando’s shoreline, each with modern luxuries that keep guests connected to the world at large. A plush sitting room offers incredible views of the area’s characteristic

swells and the soft outlines of the distant islands’ mountain ranges. In the adjoining media room an iPad and flat-screen TV both tap into the suite-wide sound system with enough volume to be heard from the sundeck. The ultimate treat is tucked away on a small side deck, enveloped by palms: guests will find a completely secluded outdoor tub stocked with bath salts and bubbles from the island’s Varua Polynesian Spa. Each villa has a personal infinity plunge pool and a private outdoor terrace where gracious staff members offer dining service upon request. Two-bedroom and three-bedroom villas are the ideal option for a family getaway or special occasion.

Each morning, guests at The Brando wake to a new itinerary of options designed to engage visitors with local Tahitian culture as well as acquaint them with Tetiaroa’s delicate, one-of-a-kind ecosystem. Enthusiastic locals deliver lessons in pareo tying, coconut usage, and Tahitian





language and music. The Tetiaroa Society, another branch of the island's sizable team, is tasked with teaching guests more about the ecological balance that exists behind the atoll's exotic beauty. Tours of neighboring uninhabited islands provide their own jaw-dropping moments. A nearby motu called Bird Island is haven to a staggering variety of avian species, some not found on any of the other 117 islands in the Tahitian archipelago. Visitors must tread lightly along the water's edge, careful not to step onto the motu's sandy shore where some birds lay eggs directly on the warm ground. The Billionaire's Bathtub, another favorite site in the atoll, takes its name from its immaculate white sand and powder blue waters. Back on the island, tours of the SWAC (seawater air conditioning) facilities shed light on why The Brando is one of the top resorts in the world. It is only the second to adopt this state-of-the-art, green system without sacrificing one iota of the world-class luxury that has become its hallmark.



Indulgence continues with The Brando's spa and dining. Guest packages include daily treatments at the Varua Polynesian Spa, which come with a Tahitian twist, like a couple's massage with scrubs and lotions made from regional salts, honey from the island's hives, and cold-pressed oils. Michelin-star chef Guy Martin's menu blends French and traditional Tahitian cuisine, and a full vegan menu from chef Kelvin Au-leong of Montreal's Invitation V is also on offer, incorporating produce from the island's organic garden.

The Brando, a resort as iconic and individualistic as its namesake, raises the bar for the hospitality industry worldwide. "Always good" is a dramatic understatement when it comes to this piece of Tahitian paradise.

For more information, please visit www.thebrando.com